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JUNIOR COLLEGE ENGLISH--WHICH WAY.

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A DISCUSSION OF THE SITUATION AND PROBLEMS OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN THE JUNIOR COLLEGE BEGINS WITH A CHAPTER ON THE JUNIOR COLLEGE AS A UNIQUE INSTITUTION AT A CRITICAL POINT IN ITS HISTORY AND EMPHASIZES THE NEED FOR AN ENGLISH FACULTY WITH A FIRM PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY. A CHAPTER ON THE SEARCH FOR A VIABLE DISCIPLINE DISCUSSES WHAT CONSTITUTES A STUDY OF ENGLISH, THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN ENGLISH TEACHING, AND THE NEED FOR A MORE MEANINGFUL FRAMEWORK AND MATRIX OF LEARNING. THE VALUE OF TRACKING AND "REMEDIATION" IN MOST INSTANCES IS QUESTIONED, AS IS THAT OF PROGRAMMED INSTRUCTION, TEACHING MACHINES, AND OTHER INNOVATIONS WHICH GENERALLY PAY LITTLE ATTENTION TO THE HUMAN CONTENT IN THE ACQUISITION OF LANGUAGE SKILLS. THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING THE STUDENT'S SENSE OF IDENTITY, VARIOUS TEACHING METHODS WHICH MIGHT EFFECT THIS, AND THE NEEDS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF STUDENTS ARE DISCUSSED IN THE CHAPTER, "TOWARD A MORE HUMANE COMPOSITION COURSE." ALSO INCLUDED ARE A CHAPTER ON THE JUNIOR COLLEGE IN RELATION TO A CHANGING SOCIETY, A SUMMARY OF THE AUTHOR'S POSTULATES ABOUT ENGLISH IN THE JUNIOR COLLEGE, AND AN APPENDIX LISTING UNIQUE PROBLEMS AND NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS IDENTIFIED IN THE WEINGARTEN-KROEGAR STUDY (AVAILABLE AS ED 013 604). (BN)

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Junior College English: Which Way?

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PREFACE

The last few years have seen the beginnings of a dialogue among teachers of English in the two-year college, a dialogue which in its implications will eventually affect both the discipline of English and the structure of the total junior college curriculum. The first major event in this dialogue was the publication in 1965 of English in the Two-Year College,[1] a report of a study sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English and directed by Samuel Weingarten, Wright Junior College, and Frederick Kroeger, Flint Community Junior College. Of importance to all concerned with English in the two-year college, the recommendations for professional improvement and the summary of unique needs resulting from the survey are included as an Appendix to this discussion. So urgent were these needs and shortcomings that the report was follwed later that year by a National Conference on the Teaching of English in the Junior College, where leaders in junior college English came together with experienced college and university teachers for three days of discussion and debate. Out of this came a second volume published by NCTE, Research and the Development of English Programs in the Junior College,[2] as well as a series of seven regional conferences held during the spring of 1966.

1 Weingarten, Samuel, and Frederick P. Kroeger. English in the Two-Year College, Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1965.

2 Archer, Jerome W., and Wilfred A. Farrell (ed.), Research and the Development of English Programs in the Junior College. Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1965.

In September 1966, the Executive Boards of NCTE and of its vigorous constituent body, The Conference on College Composition and Communication, selected a Director of the Two-Year College English Program to work with regional representatives in creating a national junior college affiliate of CCCC. The preface to the bylaws of this affiliate read in part:

> The English instructor in the two-year college and the English instructor in the four-year institution need increasingly to communicate for their mutual education. Great care has been taken to support the two-year people in developing their own programs as they both shape and react to a national dialogue, for it is recognized that college English instructors at all levels must be prepared to adapt themselves to future changes that are predictable in their magnitude but presently not discernible in their quality and import.[3]

There are now six regional CCCC junior college English organizations, coordinated by a National Junior College Committee dedicated to continuing such communication and creating a national program. Each of the six regional organizations will have regional newsletters and there is a national newsletter devoted to junior college English. Both College Composition and Communication and the Junior College Journal are devoting more space to English in the two-year college. Each year there will be six regional conferences bringing together hundreds of junior college instructors, and there will be more sessions directed toward two-year college problems at NCTE and CCCC conventions.

But this is at best a beginning. The issues which fostered this activity and debate are still with us. As a junior college instructor who has had, in coordinating the activities of NCTE and CCCC in the

3 Bylaws for Regional CCCC Conferences on English in the Two-Year College.

area of junior college English for the past year, an unusual opportunity to view and assess much of what is occurring in two-year colleges across the nation, I offer this discussion as another contribution to the debate. I cannot presume to present a solution to the many problems facing us, but I hope that I will be able in the following discussion to indicate the direction in which future discussion must go.

Richard Worthen
December, 1967

A UNIQUE INSTITUTION

Junior college English instruction is at a critical point in its short history. Still young and flexible, without a tradition and philosophy of its own upon which to base decision and plot a course for the future, it has accepted too readily a traditional pattern for segregating students and the assumptions of the old academic hierarchy within which that pattern finds its logic. We, as junior college English teachers, need to create for ourselves a firm professional identity. The longer we avoid the issues, the more likely it is that four-year college structures, originally planned for a different kind of student working in a different educational atmosphere determined by different goals, will be firmly imposed as the "solution" to our unique problems and needs.

Our special needs stem in large measure from the "open door" policy in which junior colleges have always prided themselves, but whose implications for goals and curriculum structures they have considered only superficially. If we say that we conduct an open door college, do we mean that everyone can go to college? The answer is "Yes...almost." But a college is first of all a place where all are expected to perform like adults. That eliminates the custodial function; we do not exist to keep young people off the streets. Further, if we are really to have an open door, the junior college must help any adult (any high school graduate or person over eighteen) discover what at his particular stage in his history he should do next. This precludes neat and quick categorizing and necessitates instructional formats flexible enough to allow the student to achieve gradually the insight and self-knowledge necessary for realistic

decisions, rather than quick and premature ones. (The question of the legitimate limitations on the responsibility of the two-year college and of the supplementary responsibilities of society will be dealt with later.)

The two-year college then becomes a place where college, or adult, performance has a new but not a softer meaning: the student is expected to extend his present capacity and awareness in a rigorous fashion. This means, too, that he must be able to leave and return at various stages of his career and maturity without penalty. When he does leave, however, he should ideally be unable to deny having had a significant experience (although that might amount to no more than seeing his immaturities a little more honestly), and he would recognize both the concern of the college for him as an individual and his own reasons for leaving.

Thinking of "college" in this sense points out the uniqueness of the two-year college. Potentially at least, our institution provides a contemporary "way into" the college experience for the whole spectrum of adults. But if we are theoretically the "way into" the college experience as I have tried to describe it here, we are also responsible for conducting the experience so that certain students may inform themselves that they are not, at that point in their history, ready to engage in the college experience. If we succeed in all this we are an institution second to none in purpose and integrity.

When these unique characteristics are forgotten, the junior college's major task becomes the creation of a standard transfer program paralleling what is thought to be the stablilized, ideal model in the nearest state college or university. Inevitably this leads to elaborate remedial machinery, and fosters as a secondary function a program of "useful"

training for those who will not transfer.

The problem with such a rationalization is that everything then finds its justification in what is "practical" in the worst sense. A more humane position recognizes that English at the freshman level can engage the students' affective and intellectual capacities in experiences of real personal and philosophical significance, that it can "turn on" the potential students as no other undergraduate course can. When it goes well, consequently, freshman English is a wrenching and a memorable experience. Too often, however, such an experience in its intensity and demands as well as its very nature and quality is reserved for the special student--the "real transfer candidate." Only when we free ourselves from the logic of the tired premises we have inherited, those which at the expense of human needs give priority to institutional convenience, do we recognize this philosophy as simplistic and wrong. We are I think beginning to recognize that we dare not reduce any student to that fraction of himself which we undertake to "remediate up" to some arbitrary level of proficiency or train to fill some presumed national vocational need, whose nature or existence even the sophisticated manpower expert can forecast only for the short term and in the grossest fashion. The question of "national needs" narrowly conceived, and the two-year college's obligation to meet them deserves fuller consideration than we have as yet given it.

We need to build inclusive, releasing, and rigorous patterns of performance that motivate and encourage the student, not patterns that enforce narrow and arbitrary practices and goals. When we attempt something less than the deepest challenge that we can devise, when

we accept as our assignment a fragmenting accommodation to short term vocational needs, we lose our identity as English teachers and deny our students the opportunity to achieve to their fullest.

These are matters difficult to communicate to the average university professor who fails to recognize our special problems, and often looks down upon the junior college as a less rigorous less worthy imitation of his own institution. However well-meaning, an individual so misled cannot help us develop a workable program for the two-year college. I want to illustrate the problems of communication by the following examples.

Some years ago, a member of a large university English department informed me confidentially that he thought it time to begin paying more attention to the junior colleges, since they would soon be training a large share of those students he and his colleagues would later teach in the upper division and graduate school. It was clear from the context of his remark that what he meant was university professors should set aside some time to meet with two-year college English instructors to insure that we would train transfer students the right way. Apparently he thought I would be flattered by the attention and the confidence, but it was quite clear even then that we do not need the help he was anxious to offer. Though I could respect his concern about the candidates we would send him, it was disturbing that he seemed to view us only as some new convenience--or potential inconvenience.

On another occasion, as a member of a statewide committee on articulation, I was told by a university administrator that all junior colleges would have to segregate entering freshmen in English as the university did, since otherwise it would be unfair to university freshmen. I

suggested that rather than exercise such academic imperialism, the university test all students entering the third-year--including their own--to decide who needed the additional training he seemed to foresee for the products of the junior college.

At a meeting for two-year college English instructors sponsored recently by one midwestern state university, the subject was the undergraduate literature program. Four university instructors told how they taught undergraduate literature courses. They then questioned each other and finally entertained questions from the floor. Some forty junior college instructors listened to how it was done at the university. They learned how university people conduct an undergraduate class, and they learned, too, that this was how it should be done. The format of the meeting made that clear and made it impossible for the university instructors to learn how classes in the two-year college were taught, how indeed they would have to be taught to be successful. It seems fair to say that it never occurred to them that they should be interested in such questions, or that in the deepest professional sense they and their two-year college colleagues are equal citizens in the community of English teachers. After the first meeting and cocktail party that followed, the panelists left the conference. They had done their stint and apparently saw no reason to attend later sessions at which two-year college instructors described their own courses.

It is time to discourage such attitudes, to reject such a subordinate position and look to the larger assignment that really confronts us. We need new patterns of relationship (1) with our colleagues in the universities, to whom we may have to say no on certain matters; (2) with our colleagues

within the two-year college faculty with whom we must insist we are more than a vocational service department; and (3) with our students, whose full potential we must seek to release. This implies that we must re-examine the two seemingly mutually-supporting ideas that shape the mold into which the junior college program is in danger of being cast:

> --that we need not become too entangled with the problems of instructing a student glibly labeled non-academic, since he will eventually become a member of the industrial labor force.
>
> --that the answer to the problem of this non-academic student is to provide special remedial courses and technical training.

We in the junior college, the newest and hence least tradition bound segment of public education, have both the opportunity and the obligation to break this mold, to create fresh patterns of instruction dedicated to releasing the fullest measure of human potential. As the future unfolds, there will be no more critical spot in American education, and in it no part of the curriculum more knotty and challenging than the complex of activities called English.

THE SEARCH FOR A VIABLE DISCIPLINE

Increasingly in the field of English we see a groping for a rationale that will relate the responsibility for research to the responsibility for teaching, placing both in perspective with the demands of the larger curriculum and society. In the introductory argument of his book Realms of Meaning, Philip Phenix writes of our time:

> The perennial threat to meaning is intensified under the conditions of modern industrial civilization. Four contributing factors deserve special emphasis. The first is the spirit of criticism and skepticism. This spirit is part of the scientific heritage, but it has also tended to bring the validity of all meanings into question. The second factor is the pervasive depersonalization and fragmentation

> of life caused by the extreme specialization of a complex interdependent society. The third factor is the sheer mass of cultural products, especially knowledge, which modern man is required to assimilate. The fourth factor is the rapid rate of change in the conditions of life, resulting in a pervasive feeling of impermanence and insecurity.[1]

He argues that human beings "are essentially creatures who have the power to experience meanings" and furthermore that "general education is the process of engendering essential meanings." The curriculum is integral to the generation of meaning, and it should not only reflect the world of knowledge but also, we are coming to recognize, those structures of intellect and feeling that produce understanding. The modern approach to knowledge, no longer satisfied with mere taxonomy, has an instrumental dimension. We now see knowledge as arrayed perceptions that attack and solve problems of understanding. Phenix argues that the concept of the dicipline can bring coherence to the curriculum.

Though the idea of a discipline is not new to English scholars, what Phenix and others propose is a conscious search for a conceptual center more elegant, more manageable, more efficiently communicated, and more consciously generative of insights and relationships. This, they hope, would supplant but also embrace what an older generation of scholars identified as objectivity, respect for scholarly authority, honest use of data, insistence on internal consistency in intellectual life, and freedom from dogma.

1
Phenix, Philip. Realms of Meaning, New York: McGraw-Hill Company, 1964. p. "Introduction"

King and Brownell in The Curriculum and the Disciplines of Knowledge[2] outline the characteristics of the modern disciplines.

> A discipline is a community of persons.
> A discipline is an expression of human imagination.
> A discipline is a domain.
> A discipline is a tradition.
> A discipline is a syntactical structure--a mode of inquiry.
> A discipline is a conceptual structure--a substance.
> A discipline is a specialized language or other system of symbols.
> A discipline is a heritage of literature and artifacts and a network of communications.

There is of course the objection that English as a subject does not lend itself to such orderliness, that the very suggestion that it does is anti-humanistic--but the attempt to create some viable order persists. A late attempt by Richard Ohmann appeared in College English in February 1967, and there was a three-day pre-convention session on The Discipline of English at the 1967 NCTE convention.

Gleason has suggested that language--not the English language but the phenomenon language, that which pervades the strucutre of all man's symbolic activities--be the center of the dicipline of English, a conception reinforced by Walter Ong's observation (at a recent humanities conference) that all symbolization drives toward verbalization. Perhaps a better term than "language" might be "symbolic process", which suggests communication, self-awareness, cerebration, aesthetic engagement, the making of form, the impulse for order. A discipline exists because people have been able to share and bring order to what has taken shape through a symbolic act. This

2
King, Arthur, R., Jr., and John A. Brownell. The Curriculum and the Disciplines of Knowledge, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966., p. 95

act of symbolic transaction with the world is more central to English than to any other subject in the curriculum. It is our discipline, not just in the sense that all we deal with is generated out of the symbolic act but also in that we do not exclude how a work is generated from the contemplation and analysis of what is generated. In a sense, it is our concern with the how that makes English unique among the disciplines, more basic and necessarily more pervasive and open than any other.

In a talk given to the Iowa English Teachers Association, James Squire pointed out:

> From Bruner's...The Process of Education[3] in 1960 to the most recent report by Bloom, Davis, and Hess on Compensatory Education for Cultural Deprivation,[4] modern curriculum theorists seem agreed on certain fundamental concepts. Four of these at least are beginning to affect the teaching of English in profound and far-reaching ways:
>
> 1. Learning is a process of inquiry and discovery and must be so approached at every level of instruction.
>
> 2. New knowledge is being accumulated so rapidly that it is no longer possible even for the specialist to learn the complete content of his area of specialization. Consequently, courses must avoid attempting to "cover the ground" of a subject area and concentrate on the "structure of knowledge" of the subject area.
>
> 3. Pupils learn the intellectual constructs in any subject area through spiral processes. Basic ideas may be introduced early in the curriculum in relation to relatively simple examples, then expanded through planned reintroductions at later levels in the school.
>
> 4. No single instructional approach is successful in teaching every subject or even every segment of a subject. Approaches to learning must be found which are appropriate to the structure and essence of each discipline.

3 Bruner, Jerome S. The Process of Education, New York: Random House, 1960.

4 Bloom, Benjamin S., Allison Davis, and Robert Hess. Compensatory Education of Cultural Deprivation. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc. 1965.

A two-year college program might thus best be built around human symbolic needs and their representation in language, rather than around the so-called vocational or transfer function. In considering such a rationale for an English program, we need to examine the matrices of learning which have developed fluency and inventiveness in some students, and left other students painfully deficient in them. What do we know about the growth of language and thought? Even though we may need to go far back to understand this, such a consideration is not irrelevant to English in the two-year college.

We know that the acquistion of language is systematic, with grammar becoming increasingly complex as the child makes finer and finer discriminations. Most exciting and suggestive is the growing conviction that the matrix developed for the acquisition of language determines the psychological set toward the language experience itself. A dynamic, evocative matrix teaches the child that language is one kind of action, a tool for shaping rather than merely a system for labeling the world. It is interesting to note that the more we examine the problem of teaching the culturally deprived, the more we find ourselves concentrating on enriching experiences which foster fluency and inventiveness in language.

What we believe about the development of fluency can be inferred from the curriculum we construct. When a child enters school we praise and nurture his natural fluency, giving him many opportunities to explore his feelings and his life through language experiences. Imagination is encouraged through literature and the re-creation of experience in language. Gradually the student learns a second language, that of writing, as a further means of sharing with others, and imaginative orderings take on a new and more permanent dimension.

Ideally, by about fourth grade the student is fluent and creative in his speech, reasonably comfortable in his writing, expectant and sometimes critical in what he reads. Such a child has successfully extended his symbolic capacities to embrace a second order symbolization of experience, writing and reading, and learned to move easily from one symbolic mode to another. As he refines and clarifies his writing in terms of specific purposes and audiences, he is led to an awareness of himself as an individual with a characteristic and unique style. If the student has achieved the autonomy expected from this process, he is fluent, coherent, sensitive. He knows that style speaks. He is aware of language as a generative machine creating new modes of thought, even new value, and he knows that he ignores logic at his peril. In a sense, he has achieved freedom. He moves "easy in the harness," as Robert Frost put it.

During the early school years, the student has greater resources in his oral than in his written language. The achievement of fluency in the "unnatural" secondary symbolization of writing is really quite astonishing. It should not be surprising that even at the college level poor students often need to have fluency in writing consciously fostered before moving to more disciplined written expression. The student who has not successfully unified his speaking, writing, and reading may need freedom to write out of whatever ambiguous or unformulated facets of self he wishes as he presses for new fluency and new awareness. He needs a learning matrix that coaxes impersonally, that supports, that suggests but does not formulate prematurely, that puts him on mature terms with himself.

Far more professional concern should concentrate on devising discrete writing activities reasonable in their demands and calculated to ingrain

a psychological set anticipating completion and success. All our intuition, empathy, and commitment are needed to bring students to the identification of self as successful communicator which is necessary before mature writing can result.

The matrix of experience which we create can teach the child either that the proper condition of man is the release of self, or that such release is futile and unsatisfactory, bringing only punishment and neglect. Of the two, only the former is in its implications a legitimate goal for what Edmund Glazer, Executive Secretary of the American Association of Junior Colleges, has called, "democracy's college of the century." [5]

Returning, then, to the nature of a viable two-year college English program, we may say that through language activities we participate in the induction of adults, mostly the young, into a college level performance: into a relationship with self that leads to both identity and fluent linguistic performance. We recognize that rather than being told how to achieve identity, one performs into it through meaningful acts of communication. The matrix of learning--the complex of attitudes, requirements, and expectations within which the students works--thus becomes crucial to the effects of an English program.

The significance of this matrix may indeed be one of the most important ideas to emerge in recent years; certainly its practical value has been proven in work with poorly motivated disadvantaged students. This has shown, for example, that quality of expression and willingness to express depend upon the degree to which a student feels his discourse,

5
Quoted in Weingarten and Kroeger, English in the Two-Year College; p. 79.

written and oral, will be listened to and appreciated. Don Eulert describes the learning matrix that his study of freshman composition at Wisconsin State University found essential:

> The kind of teaching. . .validated in this research [is that which recognizes] that learning depends on the student's ego, his personal attitude and his motivation and that learning takes place when these are engaged in active encounters, "happenings," in the classroom dialogue. . . [Thus] the teacher--no guardian but a guide--must get out from between the student and his concerns and stand with him while he works to his goals. As he grows from identification with cliches toward identity [my emphasis] the student can be shown that men make their way with language; then his growing sense of worth will require his progress in manipulating language. Good expository writing can only come after doing. Writing as exercise has no reality for the student. Writing which grows from a committed need for expression and clarification will find functional forms.

The development from "identification with cliches toward identity" is a prime concern of others who are advocating a more introspective approach to writing, as we shall see in a later chapter. The performance of the whole person--his telling, seeing, hearing, writing, reading, reasoning--is the heart of the matter. Rather than diagnostic testing and attempts to extract predetermined performance, what is needed are repeated expressive experiences which will help the student achieve a stronger sense of identity. From this can come an awareness of shortcomings and eventually a tolerance for skill acquisition and mastery of a body of knowledge.

Only the most mature and autonomous student will have the patterns of achievement necessary for protracted performance in an impersonal

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6 Eulert, Don, "The Relationship of Personality Factors to Learning in College Composition," College Composition and Communication (May 1967) p. 64 and 66

learning matrix, such as that provided by programmed materials or teaching machines. With the undirected student who doubts his capacities and is unsure of his goals, there can be no such shortcuts. If anything, he will require more attention and expertise, and perhaps a larger outlay of money than other students. The two-year college is not a place for a cut-rate education, nor should it be a remedial machine for processing students into the industrial society. If literacy, intellectual commitment, identification of self as a responsible, empathic social being--the humanistic goals we support as abstractions--are to be promoted for great numbers of our population who have hitherto needed only hand skills provided in the labor market, then the junior college has not only a different task, but also an indispensable one.

One rationale for the English program in the two-year college is defined in terms of a university prototype. The structure builds miraculously down, braced by a network of cut-off scores and rigid classification of students into remedial and transfer programs. Perhaps one would be rash to urge the abolition of tracking from the two-year college English program, particularily since such a position seems to impinge on a deep seated taboo. So though I find this sensitivity most puzzling, I respect it and am not prepared to argue for the abolishment of all tracking. Instead I will say we should confine tracking to what is demonstrably necessary for a viable English program--<u>and the burden of proof should be continually on the trackers</u>. Most junior colleges need to keep the question open, giving people who suspect that the tracking-testing syndrome is at least as damaging as it is helpful the opportunity and the time to develop a workable alternative.

Rigid tracking creates a matrix for learning whose message is all too clear. No matter how much we protest that he is there for his own good, the lower track student knows from the start that he is considered lower, not yet fully accepted for the college experience. If the student hears again when he comes to college (as he has heard time and again for twelve years,) that he is second rate, the chances of eliciting a better performance are not good. If on the other hand he is gently coaxed to attempt to remake his world, he is likely--after the initial fear and disbelief--to perform better out of a new conception of himself and his sensibilities. The problems and moral issues here are heightened by a recognition that emphasis upon tracking and perfunctory guidance of poorer students into vocational training programs has been used, perhaps unconsciously, to reinforce class and racial barriers. Over-emphasis on tracking based on admittedly imperfect instruments measuring skills narrowly defined and inadequately understood perpetuates a kind of middle class educational prerogative within the very instruction which should seek to develop the full potential of all students, whatever their social and cultural backgrounds.

In the name of efficiency and usefulness, the English course for the segregated lower tracks too often becomes, despite its other possibilities, illogically skill-centered. The matrix of learning in such a case elicits a perfunctory, mechanical, unwilling performance from the uncommitted student, who fears--with good reason--that his work will be read as a duty and returned with veiled rejection. English becomes in this way the most unpleasant subject in the curriculum, breeding partially disguised hostility, sullen submission, and a variety of patterns of avoidance.

Is it any wonder that a large percentage of these students drop out or perform poorly, thus conveniently demonstrating they are "not college material?"

English teachers are often unconscious victims of psychological and pedagogical matrices quite as much as are their students. Out of my concern for the student's inability to cope with such perceptual blindness, I have drawn up an exercise for students who need to realize that not only they but also their teachers have difficulty functioning in the lower track of the two-year college English program. My plan is to present five sentences for the student to complete and later discuss:

> 1. Realizing that the attitudinally disadvantaged teacher has set his sights low and is convinced that lower track students should begin with tiny, everyday ideas and work toward something really practical and that he will be stunned by the introduction of abstractions, the lower track student should . . . .
>
> 2. Recognizing frankly that attitudinally disadvantaged teachers tend to be sluggish and unimaginative because of the deprivation in their background, and that they thus cannot understand the range of your interests and gifts, you should . . . .
>
> 3. Attitudinally disadvantaged teachers, handicapped at an early age by a limiting and essentially insensitive set of social values, are almost incapable of understanding that there is another world that they must be inducted into in order that . . . .
>
> 4. As long as the parents of these attitudinally disadvantaged teachers continue to be apathetic or even satisfied with the life they have made, the lower track student must expect . . . .
>
> 5. It is well to bear in mind that any genuine and successful attempt to help these attitudinally disadvantaged teachers will be a threat to their self-image and will probably result in[7]. . . .

Tracking and placement force us into the deadly stereotypes upon which these statements focus. We need to ask if there is another framework, another matrix of learning, that will allow us the flexibility and time

[7] I owe some credit to Richard B. Zamoff for this brilliant conception.

to deal more humanely with all our students, to recognize and engage them as the unique individuals which they are. If some of the energy and resources now devoted to rapid placement procedures were used instead to preserve the validity and openness of our programs, especially in those classes for entering students, the two-year college English program would come closer to the ideal of "democracy's college of this century."

Hopefully, we have the conceptual tools and the integrity to face the issues honestly. It is not an exaggeration to point out that our public schools have been used for containment and suppression, whatever our slogans may proclaim. To alter this matrix for learning to produce active response and commitment requires new priorities emphasizing meaningful rather than "useful" activities. Without suggesting that English become one big "happening," we must improvise as necessary to reach the goals determined by the new and special audience we in the junior college face.

No one can be complacent, then, in the knowledge that he knows what is the shape of the discipline of English. We have delayed too long already in determining what should be its form in the modern world, and if we insist stubbornly that it is what is and always has been, we may be replaced by the behaviorists and systems specialists who will one of these days be able to do no worse than we the part of our task that too many of us at the college level scorn, the teaching of reading, writing and thinking to ordinary but aspiring adults.

INNOVATION AND SPECIALIZATION

"Innovation," now an established part of the educational dialogue, is unquestionably of direct relevance to the teaching of English in the junior college. If we are to provide great numbers of students with the best possible training and background, we cannot ignore any breakthroughs: in practice of procedure, but neither can we become so enamored of change that we fail to assess new procedures accurately and carefully. Foremost among current "innovations" are programmed instruction, teaching machines, and the systems approach to educational planning. All have in common a behavioral approach to learning, and all attempt to capitalize upon specialized training. In general, they pay little attention to the human context in the acquisition of language skills.

As an example of what "teaching" and "education" often mean to the innovators, we might look at Charles L. Blaschke's reference to Secretary McNamara's speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars in August, 1966. McNamara emphasized that while the imperatives of national security make the Defense Department the world's largest educator:

> Those same imperatives require that it also be the world's most efficient educator. As a result, the Defense Department pioneered some of the most advanced teaching techniques. Indeed, it has been the vanguard of a whole series of innovations in educational technology.

And Blaschke elaborates:

> The technologies developed by the military service, often with the assistance of industry and educators, range from the "software" end of the spectrum to the "hardware," including many pedagogical techniques in between.

[1] Blaschke, Charles L., "The DCD: Catalyst in Educational Technology," in Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. XLVIII (January 1967) pp. 208-9.

"Educator" here is not what the English instructor intends by the term; yet McNamara is speaking of an important fraction of what we do when we do our job well. And there is a public who would say that fraction is all that really counts. If the English teacher can set aside his irritation with the engineering metaphors, he may find thought-provoking suggestions in the writings of educational innovators.

One must concede that there is some merit in taking such an overall view of our endeavor as does Donald Meals of the Education Division of Raytheon, Inc.:[2]

> ... the model is a visual aid holding details in focus, fixing assumptions and serving all interested parties as a mnemonic device...Systems analysis calls for the educator today to see his activity as a whole--not only the whole child but also the curriculum and the media and the teacher and the management system for putting these and other resources together in a functional system.

But while such educational engineers take pains to include the teacher and student, somehow these never have the complexity and depth of other factors in their discussions. One likes to believe that the focus will always be the student, not the system, but he has qualms when he learns that the answer to an alarming dropout problem in a two-year college with acres of machines is simply to enforce the system more rigidly. Although instructors protest it is the small group discussion which really engages and motivates the student; something about the structure of the system does not readily accommodate that feedback.

2
Meals, Donald W., "Humanistic Models for Systems Planning," Phi Delta Kappan, XLVIII: 199-203.

At the last American Junior College Association convention, Arthur Cohen, Director of Junior College ERIC, the federal clearinghouse for junior college research, presented a systems approach to curriculum management.[3] He establishes a rationale for enforcing desired changes in teaching by reasoning deductively from such abstractions as "teaching" and "learning." Teaching is "creating a situation in which maximum learning can and will take place." Learning is "the process by which an activity originates or is changed through reacting to an encountered situation... [such] learning is human change [and as such a change in behavior]." Goals are then defined in terms of the desired change in behavior, and this change measured to see if teaching has been successful. If the proper behavior does not occur, the teacher has failed and should change his methods. Such a simple and elegant conception certainly forces us to think freshly--if not with alarm--about what we are doing.

A less simplistic approach, however, might recognize that visible accessible to objective measurement behavior/is only a part of the total behavior of an individual. Man is a creature of his gestalts, and his behavior results from perceptions of the <u>total</u> envelope of experience or learning matrix within which he is asked to function. Since some of this is internalized and not accessible to direct testing, to base teaching solely and literally on measurable behavior is to create a framework that may elicit unexpected and undesired attitudes and responses.

The English instructor, faced with an equation for learning that calls for systematic acquisition of an arbitrarily defined content, may rebel

3
Cohen, Arthur M., "Teacher Preparation: Rationale and Practices," <u>Junior College Journal</u>, XXXVII, 8: 21-25.

because such content ignores affective, esthetic, and poetic facets of the human person. But such an observation will sound merely sentimental to hard headed systems specialists, who literally reduce teachers and students to factors in a equation. Perhaps both might learn from the programmer Peter Piper commenting on the value of a teacher checking his knowledge against a programmed format:[4]

> The real strength of programmed instruction is that it is relevant instruction. Programming forces the creators of instruction to face up squarely to the issues involved. It compels them to make decisions about the end product of their instructions--what behaviors are acceptable, and what is practicable. This weighing of each issue often results in the discarding of a long-cherished thought, motive, or concept. It also calls for a certain humility on the part of the teacher-programmer in that he has to accept that the student (or, better, the student's performance) is the final arbitrator of how and why a subject should be presented. Gone, in this situation, is the teacher's face of omnipotence. And this is hard to take; it calls for some drastic and painful shifts in thinking for most of us.

Piper's observations are hard to quarrel with, provided we program skills and concepts that are honestly related to our discipline. However, one teacher concerned with the possible abuses of machine technology pointed out that he could visualize "programmed four-color diagramming of sentences that would make misinformation really convincing." The dangers as well as the advantages of these new materials are great.

In a paper delivered in 1965 at the Boston Convention of the National Council of Teachers of English, Arthur Daigon[5] suggests that nothing would be lost and much gained by using machines to free the English teacher of

4
Piper, Peter.

5
Daigon, Arthur, "Computer Grading of English Composition," English Journal, LV: 46-52.

the special kind of drudgery involved in grading papers. His machines have analyzed typewritten material for many of the most common mechanical errors and, using sentence structure as an index, have been able to make helpful observations on style. Here is a sample comment that the machine might make:

> John (we are told that using first names softens criticism) please correct the following misspellings: believe, receive, Note the ie. ei problem. You overuse the words interesting, good, nice: then was repeated six times. Check trite expressions. All of your sentences are of the subject-verb variety and all are declarative. Reconstruct. Check subject-verb agreement in the second paragraph. You had trouble with this in your last paper. Title lacking. Do the following related assignment for tomorrow...

Useful as this can be, one has to note that unless John is unusually well motivated, he will need a context of affective involvement with a teacher before this message will induce him to make thoughtful corrections. And he will need to feel that the next assignment is an expression of the teacher's thought and concern for him and his needs, not just the unfolding of a master plan for the development of writing in Grade X. Recognizing the potential danger inherent in any measure that promotes a depersonalized matrix for learning, the introduction of the machine in whatever form should be carried out only with respect for the needs of the individual student.

Increasing involvement with new techniques and materials brings a very real danger of over-specialization and a fragmenting of the student's performance. The "reading teacher" is a case in point. At a recent junior college conference in a group discussing reading, it became clear that some teachers view themselves as teachers of reading, others as teachers of composition and literature--and both groups seemed quite happy with the split. For the teachers of literature, the division provided

a rationalization for sending the "nonreader," the "nonverbal," the "disadvantaged," and the lower track student for remediation and special drill. For the reading specialist, it made his place in the curriculum all the firmer.

But what are the special problems this fragmentation is supposed to solve? Many junior college students are not good readers, but most have no deep seated disturbances that account for their reading problem. What they need most are successful experiences in extracting the meaning from college level material, including literature. Such reading necessarily draws heavily upon rather ordinary reading skills, such as answering the question "What does it say?" And this question inevitably leads to "How does it say it?" So we find ourselves looking closely at the text, asking the significance of the title, identifying its parts, its significant transitions, and its underlying patterns. This is good and fairly ordinary practice in a class in freshman composition, quite in keeping with the tenets of teaching "English." It is also teaching reading.

There are other reading skills in which a student should be competent, and which warrant some time in the English classroom. (Indeed, the English teacher should have had an intensive introduction to them in his professional training.) Students should learn to read quickly, to skim, to acquire a rapid overview, to draw upon an accumulation of knowledge to facilitate skipping quickly over some parts and concentrating on the new and the original. As teachers of English we must be sure students are aware of and able to use a whole range of skills. Of course, the reading of literature requires other competencies, but the processes involved are really only more sophisticated extensions of these simpler ones.

Reading and literature are not separate fields, not unrelated fragments of the student's school experience. One of the junior college English instructor's greatest contributions can be enforcing the realization that there is here an essential oneness, however much the rage to specialize might like to make this process into two.

Let us concede that educational innovation and specialization may have their contributions to make to the by no means simple task of teaching English in the two-year college. But let us refuse to be enticed away from an essential insight that we are just beginning to exploit: that the student who is convinced that he is being taken seriously by his instructor is most likely to continue to perform and develop. When the matrix of learning is such that it can convince him of the value of the machine and of the specialist, he will even go willingly to them for help.

TOWARD A MORE HUMANE COMPOSITION COURSE

There has been developing in the last five or six years a quiet revolution in the teaching of writing. Emphasis has shifted from the product to the process, from the study and emulation of models to the discovery of self through repeated performance of the act of writing. I am of course talking here only of emphasis: few would contend that a model has no value, Indeed good reading, the kind that English instructors should encourage, emphasizes awareness of the writer's rhetorical choices as one of the most important skills. But many of us do contend that the emphasis has been too much on the externals--the outline, the length, the classical nomenclature, the minutiæ and mechanics. Though these are not to be slighted, they ought not to be emphasized at the expense of an

awareness of self as a unique communicator who must discover and develop his own individual style.

"Identity" is today an ambiguous word which nevertheless becomes of great significance in the process of composition. Writing should be perhaps our most powerful avenue to identity, since it can always manifest a "taste of self" and used effectively comprises a demanding exercise in symbolic expression. Unfortunately, however, even when a certain fluency has been acquired by the student, writing is often impersonal and habit-ridden, a repetition of cliches, of conventional classroom thought, language, and organization--hardly expressive of the deeper self.

But "identity" is surely the key word, and the two-year college writing program is one of our most powerful instruments for developing it. We deal with a greater percentage of the "inadequately identified" than do our colleagues in four-year colleges and universities. Of course, in an acute form lack of identity is a problem for the psychiatrist, and in a more general sense it is a responsibility of the larger society of which the school is only one expression. The armed forces, marriage, the labor market, even riots are also social instruments for handling the universal crisis of identity. But in relation to writing and the English classroom the special sense of the term is defined by Richard Lloyd-Jones of the University of Iowa:

> I suggest that our problem is not merely that the student finds himself in a situation where people are unfriendly to his ideas. He senses that they are unfriendly to him, that they don't care what he thinks. Their judgment of his ideas is generalized into a judgment about all the things that he stands for. This judgment is a result, of course, of the prescriptiveness in dealing with form. The crisis of identity that I'm talking about is a rather specific kind which is related to content--whether the student has

> anything more to say worth saying. When the instructor insists that form is all and the student doesn't know the form, then he comes to believe that he has nothing worth expressing. Only when he is convinced of his own value as a reporter and interpreter can he be expected to write decently. This is what I'm really driving at when I speak of a problem in identity.[1]

Gordon Rohman and Albert Slike of Michigan State University question whether English teachers perform adequately when they conduct a class devoted mainly to "frequent writing and hard marking." They reason that such teachers deal with only a part of the total writing process, neglecting the whole matter of pre-writing:

> Our existential premise is that truth exists for the individual only as he himself produces it in action. Our approach stresses the importance of decision and commitment of the person in the pre-writing stages in order that discovery may follow. As we believe there is no truth without participation for the individual we say also that there is no essential goodness in an essay without evidence of such commitment. The writer comes alive only when he feels the creative process as potential within him, and his essay comes alive only from such an encounter. We do not deny the validity of extrinsic approaches to composition and to writers, with their emphasis upon methods, tradition, conditioning, grammar and the like; we only hold that these alone and these first will never produce good writing defined as fresh perspective. More than that, such approaches can be positively harmful by reducing writing and writers to "things" on machine analogies. They substitute abstractions and concepts for the writer and his composition.

The quotation is from p. 23 of Cooperative Research Project No. 2174, Pre-Writing: The Construction and Application of Models for Concept Formation in Writing. Much of the 140 page volume is devoted to a rationale for and the methods of developing pre-writing activities. The report of their study, with its elaborate but necessarily subjective procedures for evaluation, indicates tentative confirmation of the value of more attention to pre-writing.

[1] Used with permission from personal correspondence.

The work of Robert Martincich and William DiPace requires less qualification. In various forms it has been used at Diablo Valley College for a number of years.

Their approach concentrates on breaking through barriers of repression, physical dysfunctioning, and inhibition of normal fluency by implanting a psychological set conducive to task completion, release, and honest expression. The method can be adapted for use with "remedial" classes, with regular classes as a summary or reaction to the experience of the period, or with individual students who work through a designated sequence of activities on their own.

From the first, DiPace (now deceased) emphasized the importance of setting off a period of time each day to exploit for the sake of one's own psyche, self awareness, and intellectual proficiency. He wanted to lead the individual to an awareness of the satisfactions in this practice and, when he thought a student was ready, he would allow him to continue on his own. He found that students could be surprisingly productive and were often successful in imposing unexpected discipline upon themselves and their hours. His contribution was a memorable one to a two-year college faculty and student body.

With Martincich he refined applications of this simple and humane approach to what is ordinarily called remedial English, turning the laboratory in one particularly dramatic case into an experimental program in which students--predominantly Negro--were bussed onto the campus for an hour's work each day. The students invited to participate were those that high school counselors predicted would not go on to college. The

emphasis was on the evoking of regular, completed, original performances. With these students the given task involved the simplest of formats, yet in a sense it was highly structured. Some common but significant experience--a short film, a recording, a painting, some reading by the instructor--was presented. This lasted twenty-five minutes and was always followed by fifteen minutes of discussion, then ten minutes of writing. The students wrote until the end of the class and left their papers on the desk on the way out; the only requirement was that one page be filled. Even if he had to write larger and larger to fill the space, a student could always complete the task. The only pressure was exerted by the instructor telling periodically how much time was left. Later, as the process became somewhat routine, the instructor would study the group for overt signs of frustration and puzzlement, writing more leading, suggestive, or discriminating questions on the board for the puzzled or uneasy student to pursue if he wanted.

Papers were not graded. Students learned that their papers were read only through the informal and indirect references that the instructor made as he commented on the work generally. Such a procedure was characterized by the tightest of structures in one sense and the loosest in another, for there was no limit placed on the nature of the response. The student was always successful.

The goal was release and fluency and as students progressed, demands were stepped up; more time and space were mastered until self exploration and self expression became an ingrained expectation. The quality of expression, form, and even spelling improved. Students at the end of a few weeks were amazed at the amount of writing they had done, and often

wanted to discuss their progress and ideas with the instructor. With the development of fluency came some confidence in ability to complete a task, some awareness that all people have both good and bad moments in their attempts to communicate. The students, having discovered something new of value within themselves, were willing to move out, to incorporate into their experience esthetic forms and more formal knowledge. They began to see value in the conscious development of skills. Some were ready for a more rhetoric-centered approach to composition, others turned to specific remedial work.

The DiPace-Martincich approach lends itself to many variations. Extended, two-hour reading and writing sessions, for example, allow a variety of formats for reading, discussion, and writing. Regular, successful performance ultimately frees the student to acknowledge his strengths and his shortcomings so that he can develop needed skills with purpose and profit. Rather than implying a lowering of standards, such a procedure has all the demand and rigor inherent in any honest human confrontation.

Conceding that there are very likely more types of student in a given class than can be discriminated by current teaching methods, Richard Lloyd-Jones (already quoted above) identifies three different problems of instruction which a teacher is likely to face. The first of these (and one all too familiar in the two-year college) is the student with a problem of identity who does not feel he has anything worthwhile to say. Lloyd-Jones has pointed out that what these need are sympathetic instructors who encourage fluency and continued production, who "hear" and offer the kind of analysis and suggestion that help the student overcome

communication barriers, rather than instructors who concentrate on linguistic and rhetorical shortcomings *per se*.

The second problem is the student who knows all too well--and too narrowly--who he is and where he is going, revealing a vocational and economic, rather than an educational, orientation. With such a student, a good instructor works from the narrow base of interest and competence to enlarge it into something more humane. Great tact and sensitivity are required to work from the established base without threatening the student's already achieved identity.

The third problem Lloyd-Jones identifies is the student who is fluent, but too facile and irresponsible in his writing. He needs simply to be forced to examine the implications of his own remarks and thus to discover more exactly what he is implying about himself.

Recognizing that in the typical classroom the instructor will be faced with all three problems, and perhaps many more besides, Lloyd-Jones attempts to create a structure which will work successfully with all these students. The sequence of assignments he sets up is designed to make the students conscious of the discriminations involved in his communication choices, most of which he already understands after a fashion and practices unaware. By forcing the student to recast his experience for different purposes, Lloyd-Jones makes him aware of such problems as audience, voice, personna, distortion, sequence, generalization, and oversimplification. Assignments alternate between performance and attention to the components that shape that performance, moving over a period of time from a consideration of self to a consideration of self in the social world, and finally to abstract intellectual questions.

Though each set of assignments must be specific to the class for which they are created, the following example will illustrate how these general goals are realized in practice:

Schedule of Assignments

(This is the first ten for the semester)

1. Describe an Experience.

2. What does "experience" mean as you used the term? How did you decide where to begin your description? Where to end it? For whom does the experience have meaning?

3. Describe a crisis which you did not recognize as a crisis until afterward.

4. How is a crisis different from an experience? How does the awareness of "crisis" affect the events? The telling about the events? Who is the audience for your description?

5. Rewrite your description in #1 or #3 for an authority figure, e.g., parents, police, teacher. . .

6. What kind of thing did you change? In what way did rewriting change the meaning of the experience? In what way might this enlarge the term "experience" as you used it in previous assignments?

7. Rewrite the experience for a child.

8. What kind of thing did you change? Did this rewriting change your understanding of the experience? If so, in what way? Did you have to modify experience itself to fit the new audience?

9. Discuss analytically the meaning exemplified in the experience you described.

10. What is implied about the nature of the audience by your changes in the order, kind and amount of detail? Describe change in your own person as a writer.

Assignments are followed by the sharing of papers, with discussion highlighting the complex nature of the act of communication. A student in such a class profits from the chance to measure his own performance

subjectively against that of others, and he may be induced to raise questions about his own particular stance. He looks into himself, discovering his own latent powers. This requires, of course, an evocative psychological matrix, which will be discouraged by either a bland classroom homogeneity or an emphasis on remediation, downgrading this essential inner search.

THE JUNIOR COLLEGE AND A CHANGING SOCIETY

This report has now made its mea culpas for two-year college English and set forth (some will say too bravely) the independence, aspirations, and imagination needed to adequately play the role of "democracy's college of the century." So often seen as the solution to the "nonacademic" or vocational student, the junior college needs perhaps more than any other institution of higher education to be aware of changes in the nature of society and of the manpower needs which these create or alter. One of the most serious of these changes is an increase in leisure brought about by increased productivity.

In 1959 Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., asked about the age we are entering: "Will it be an epoch when the American people, seeking mass distraction and mass surcease through mass media, will continue to grow more and more indistinguishable from one another? Or will it be an epoch when people will use leisure creatively to develop their own infinitely diverse individualities?[1] One year later in Leisure in America,[2] Max Kaplan maintained:

1
Schlesinger, Arthur, Jr., quoted in Max Kaplan, Leisure in America. , p. e

2
Kaplan, Max, Leisure in America. pp 4-5

> Leisure..deals with hours and ways of behavior in which we are freest to be ourselves. Thus what we do--whether on the noblest of levels and aspirations or the lowest of tastes--is a clue or indication of what we are, who we are, where we want to go... In our leisure we stand exposed. Through our leisure we provide the elements for diagnosing our culture to the observer, and through the effects of leisure we may see how deeply we are in an age of leisure.

There is a very real qualitative difference between this age and the last. More than any other people, we in America have been a working society in which leisure has been something earned, a temporary respite from work. This is why being deprived of a place in the labor force devastates one's sense of well-being, and perhaps why we have used vocational training to handle the problems of the less competent student. Now, however, we have the challenge and the opportunity of a world which more and more releases us from work as we have been taught to think about it. Already "leisure" is looming larger as a concern of our culture than is work, and it demands far more creativity and autonomy.

Education in the modern world has operated in the service of work. The covert instruction of attitudes implicit in educational structures has in fact been more effective than the overt instruction, and its main force has been to contain rather than to release men. Nonetheless educational philosophers have increasingly insisted that the purpose of education should be release, and as an abstraction we support this wholeheartedly. Such release is most fully achieved when the environment, speaking its silent language, says to each of us: "You are capable. The life that this culture sanctions expects you to court surprises and flirt with hunches, to do any reasonable thing you are convinced you can do, for th is how you will discover that man in fact makes his environment rather than merely adjusts to it."

Recently in conversation, Ralph Tyler former Director of the Institute for Advanced Study of the Behavioral Sciences, observed that because widespread leisure will soon be a reality in this nation, we must either educate all citizens to comprehend the nature of their society, to live responsibly in it, and to deal successfully with the psychological effects of newfound leisure, or we must try to contain the masses with guaranteed salaries and bread and circuses. He concluded, "I think we must choose the former. The latter would destroy the dignity of men." Few would argue with this reasoning, but many would ask "What is to replace the old commitments to work and material wealth? What is to generate the involvement without which there is nothing?"

In the midst of such revolutionary change, we find ourselves dealing with what by virtue of this great change are psychologically displaced adults seeking what the young and the displaced have always sought, a legitimate role for their manhood and womanhood. To find these roles, we need to turn to the universal patterns that men live through. Men are born; they grow into manhood; they mate and beget; they grow old and die. These passages through life are celebrated in rites universally; their outline continues to function, however blurred it may have become.

Recently Eric Hofer wrote in the New Yorker:[3]

> Why is it so difficult right now to pass from childhood to manhood?...This younger generation acts as though it was never going to grow up. They talk about growing up as somethhing unclean...The juvenile is the archetype of man-in-transition, and as such, he's a misfit; in order to be able to adjust to this drastic change he has to die and be reborn as an adult.

3
Tomkins, Calvin, "Profiles: The Creative Situation," The New Yorker, January 7, 1967. pp. 65-66

> And it struck me that there's the same situation at work whenever people have to adjust to really big changes--for example, when a predominately agricultural society industrializes itself, or when people move from rural areas into cities, or migrate to another country, or even when they quit work and retire. Whenever these things happen you get misfits, you get the juvenile mentalities, you get a bunch of people living and breathing in an atmosphere of passion.

The old rites of passage assert themselves in strange ways in modern society and the rite of initiation, the dramatic performance that allows one to say, "Now I am an adult," is not a clearcut thing. Perhaps the high school graduation ceremony comes closest to dramatizing the end of childhood. We should honor that idea by saying "College is an adult place," or at least "When you succeed with us, you have learned to perform like an adult." I would not like to see us settle upon a softer position in our demands upon students, for I must take seriously the need to help them find a legitimate role for their manhood and womanhood. It is the tension generated between the need for humane and understanding treatment of the dropout and the insistence that he perform as an adult in meeting our requirements that makes our task so difficult and our success potentially so important.

Students do not leave school because they are too lazy or too stupid. Most leave because they want to do something else more than they want to stay--even though they may recognize this only dimly themselves. In his essay "The Moral Equivalent of War," William James, discusses the need for adventure, change of environment, and sense of service that is a part of the appeal of war.

He writes:

> ...I have no serious doubt that the ordinary prides and shames of men, once developed to a certain intensity, are capable of organizing a moral equivalent of war..just as effective for preserving manliness... . . The martial type of character can be bred without war. Strenuous honor and disinterestedness abound elsewhere. Priests and medical men are in a fashion educated to it, and we should all feel some degree of it imperative if we were conscious of our work as an obligatory service to the state.

James proposed a national service that would offer the young adult the chance to dramatize his manliness while serving society in a substitute-war, a war against nature. Today the need is greater, the avenues of service more apparent, and the possibility not at all visionary.

In an unpublished paper entitled "The Value of National Services as an Educational Interlude" Dorothy M. Knoell writes on the limitations of our educational system to serve a certain type of student. With a few additions that she permitted me to introduce, her conception can be extended to the junior college:

> It is fairly evident from studies and observations that our present formal educational system is not adequately fulfilling the needs of many of our young people and that alternative programs are not well organized or sufficiently comprehensive. . . .
>
> There is a kind of apathy among young people not going to college [and the major deterrent among other people is the same as they are in college] which is at the same time a resultant of the forces which kept them out of college[or forced them in]and the cause of their continuing socioeconomic disadvantage. If such youths were to spend two years working in a program of national service, many of them might reconsider their immediate leap into the labor market[or into junior college]in favor of increasing their skills first to attain a better position possibly in some service occupation.

From data gathered from 700 disadvantaged seniors in New York City high schools, Dr. Knoell concludes that they have:

> a strong motivation to find a new life--not just beyond the boundaries of the ghetto but in a different part of the country; a new line of development--not just a step or two up the occupational ladder, but in a new level of service to society, particularly the poverty group; and a new educational experience--not in schools or colleges, but in an exciting new environment for learning.

As any experienced junior college instructor knows, the same frustrations and desires hold true for many two-year college students, Too many perform poorly because they want excitement, adventure, and meaning which we are not providing for them--not so much because of what does not go on inside our institutions as because of what is going on, quite normally, within the students at this particular time in their lives. We have all seen the unsuccessful, aimless student leave for a clerk's job or the armed forces, then return two or three years later with the purpose and responsibility to become an outstanding student.

Thus we are confronted with the task of re-assessing the function of the two-year college. The old conception--so firmly implanted in the minds of much of our citizenry and many of our colleagues--says that the junior college functions both to train for the transfer of the "academic" student, and to provide vocational training for the non-academic. Thus two kinds of citizens find a place in our house and we are a house divided.

From this it is only a short step--especially if we use the term "community college" sentimentally and uncritically--to finding ourselves in the role of custodian of all post-high school youth in the community, and to evaluating ourselves by some index of the numbers who drop out, a dropout always being labeled one of our failures.

But is that position viable as we look at the foreseeable future? Can we preserve the integrity of our institution and take on the community's total custodial role? If men are to demonstrate their usefulness through various services rather than as producers of things, shouldn't we be examining very critically slogans which suggest we train students for

some particular niche in industry? Will there be a sufficient number of such positions available in the future?

As we come to grips with the reality of widespread leisure, is the problem not rather one of helping adults acquire insight into themselves and into the process of learning, while we prepare them, perhaps, for short time employment and long term living? If the task of training those we have in the past labeled vocational-terminal takes on a new character, doesn't our task become to induct any adult who elects to try into a re-defined college education?

There is no quick and easy way through the labyrinth leading to adulthood and maturity, and to the degree that we deny even that the way is labyrithian, we deceive both ourselves and our students. Increasing leisure, with its psychological complications, has changed the quality of the total cultural experience, though perhaps its import is not immediately or fully apparent.

SUMMARY: TEN POSTULATES

Because this statement is intended [illegible] to stimulate discussion and promote debate which can give a new clarity and a new vigor to the English program in the two-year college, perhaps the best way to conclude is to present the underlying assumptions and arguments in their most straight-forward and unambiguous form. Though of necessity they omit the many qualifications and amplification of the preceding pages, these are my postulates about English in the junior college:

1. We have allegiances to a community--both local and national--and to a discipline. Thus we serve two masters, one social, the other academic.

2. Our discipline must not only exist in and serve the local community; it must be keenly aware of its contribution to the shaping of the larger society.

3. Our society and our world are increasingly shaped by new knowledge; one result of this process has been a rise of leisure and an erosion of old values based on work.

4. In such a society, both the humanities and a knowledge of the nature of language and the symbolic process are vital in developing awareness of the nature of contemporary reality. The functions of art were never more essential.

5. Our approach to teaching must be humane, democratic, and inclusive; but the two-year college must develop its own unique kind of academic rigor. Its function is neither that of emulating the nearest state college or university nor that of custodian of all wayward persons over 18 years old.

6. In one sense the two-year college wants to make of a registrant a student and acquaint him with some of the values of a scholar, whereas the four-year college assumes it has registered a student and tries to launch him as a scholar. Though the four-year college, too, cannot ignore problems of motivation, there is a difference in emphasis.

7. To meet the problem of motivation and direction, a viable program for the junior college is probably more complex in format, more psychologically oriented, and more ambiguous; hence it demands of its instructors more tolerance of ambiguity. In this context, English must be directed toward the whole person, not to some vocational abstraction; the less tracking and "remediation" resorted to, the better the program is likely to be.

8. The total climate of the college is vital to the success of a two-year college English program. It must be alive, open, rich with communication experiences, and it must itself communicate the message of openness and democratic relationships.

9. The discipline of English has its own unique message for all persons; it cannot become the servant of another discipline or vocation.

10. Whatever we teach must be honestly related to our discipline; we must not sacrifice its integrity by turning over its parts to specialists whose perspective is limited, conducting courses that entertain, perhaps, but which make us less than a college.

APPENDIX: Unique Problems and Needed Improvements Identified in the Weingarten-Kroeger Study[1]

Unique Problems of Teaching English In The Two-Year College[2]

1. Recognition of the unique identity and function of the two-year college: the need for a recognition that the two-year college, which is generally a community college, is an institution for helping students on whatever level of ability or achievement they are--that it has an identity of its own.

2. Effect of the "open-door policy": a wide range of preparation, ability, interests, needs, backgrounds, and goals within a single composition class as a result of this policy.

3. Necessity for remedial programs: the need for remedial English programs because high school teaching has not developed, in large numbers of students, the basic language skills necessary for college work.

4. Transfer and terminal students: a conflict of dual aims of preparing transfer students for senior college or university work and of offering useful work to terminal students in the same class.

5. Maintaining standards: difficulty of maintaining standards of college level work because so many students are inadequately prepared.

6. Continued high school attitudes: a situation in some two-year colleges were high school attitudes by students continue and the development of a mature academic atmosphere becomes an impossibility.

7. Needs for motivation: need for motivating and guiding large numbers of students who lack interest and have unfavorable attitudes toward composition and literature.

8. Class size and teacher load: English composition classes in most two-year colleges are too large, and the individual teacher has too many hours of class contact. Current teaching loads and class size limit the number of papers that can be assigned; they make it impossible for the teacher to correct or criticize the written work satisfactorily.

1 Weingarten, Samuel, and Frederick P. Kroeger. English in the Two-Year College. Champaign, Ill. National Council of Teachers of English, 1965, pp. 75-78

2 Based on statements by 292 teachers of English in the two-year college.

9. Minimum emphasis on English: there are some two-year colleges where the emphasis is on vocational, practical courses, leading to minimized emphasis on English courses.

10. Need for two-year college minded teachers: the heterogeneous student body and the limitations of large numbers of students require teachers who have special attitudes and skills and who are willing to become involved in teaching this kind of student. There is a need for a better understanding by English teachers of the junior college program and philosophy.

11. Need for teachers who are trained in communication: teachers of English in the two-year college should be trained not only in the humanities but also in fields that relate to the teaching of composition: semantics, linguistics, logic, and rhetoric.

12. Two-way articulation of the two-year college: (1) with high schools, to urge them to strengthen their English courses by emphasizing more practical writing practice; (2) with four-year colleges, to gain their cooperation in planning basic English courses; to determine what proficiencies they expect two-year college graduates to have; and to solve the problem of how to give courses in the two-year college that not only meet the needs of this type of institution but are also transferable.

Needed Studies on Aspects of Teaching English in The Two-Year College[3]

1. Way of motivating students who are poorly prepared and who have no definite goals.

2. Junior college graduates' success in English in their last two years of college work.

3. Development of an adequate screening and placement test in English.

4. Ways to test writing ability of incoming students.

5. Procedures in advanced placement.

6. The relationship of formal grammar, linguistics, and semantics to writing.

7. Grading standards in the two-year college.

8. Teaching load and class size in English in the two-year college.

3
Based on statements by 292 teachers and 187 department chairmen in the two-year colleges.

9. Follow-up of students who had remedial English in the two year college, that is, an evaluative study of remedial English.

10. Data that prove conclusively the efficacy of limited enrollments in composition classes.

11. Evaluation of materials: textbooks, films, tests, etc.

12. Courses in graduate schools for orienting prospective teachers in the needs of the two-year college students and the nature of remedial work in the junior college.

13. The terminal-transfer problem: needed research on this problem, leading to conclusions as to whether it is desirable to have both types of students in the same course or to have separate courses for terminal and transfer students.

14. The remedial aspect of English in the two-year college as it relates to the teaching of transfer and terminal students.

15. The use of lay readers in composition courses.

16. Graduation requirements in English in the two-year college.

17. Course of study in composition with useful insights from structural linguistics and transformational grammar.

Recommendations For the Professional Improvement of Teachers of English In The Two-Year College[4]

1. That the professional journals publish more articles on teaching English on the two-year college level.

2. That the professional journals have sections which will serve as forums for information and opinion on English in the two-year college.

3. That there be considered the publication of a small workshop journal of a practical kind that would be helpful to teachers of remedial English (reading and speech to be included).

4. That there be established an exchange teacher program among levels of higher education and also among two-year college teachers of English.

[4] Based on statements by 292 teachers and 187 department chairmen in two-year colleges.

5. That centers be established for the development of two-year college curricular materials: for the evaluation of materials; for the analysis of courses of study.

6. That graduate departments in English introduce courses in the teaching of language arts (written and oral communication and reading) in the two-year college, with special attention to problems in this type of institution.

7. That summer workshops be established especially for the development of new techniques and materials for subfreshman English.

8. That steps be taken to make available to two-year college teachers instruction in an area where there is a strongly felt need for continued study, linguistics--especially the application of linguistics to writing. There is a need for Linguistic Institutes at regional levels.

9. That bibliographical materials in linguistics and study outlines be prepared for independent study by teachers who cannot take courses.

10. That some action be taken against the situation in the two-year college affiliated with a high school where the college teachers have time-consuming additional high school duties.